

# WHY WE DID NOT RUN KETCHERSIDE'S ARTICLES

An editorial by Reuel Lemmons, in Firm Foundation, June 4, 1963

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Over the past year several references have been made in this paper to Carl Ketcherside and his liberal position regarding unity. Brother Ketcherside requested space to reply to his critics. We felt that he should have it, and urged him to do so, with the stipulation that he not use the Firm Foundation simply as a medium for airing his peculiar views, but rather that he actually reply to his critics. We requested that he "point out where and how you have been misrepresented. I shall expect them (the four articles he asked to write) to cite the quotations which misrepresented you, and show that either (A) you made no such statements; (B) that the quotation is out of context; (C) that it has been given a meaning contrary to your own; (D) explain what you did mean by the quotation."

Brother Ketcherside wrote and submitted the four articles. In them he took only passing notice of some very minor criticism of his liberal position, and proceeded to do exactly what we requested that he not do: use the Firm Foundation as a medium to get his liberal views before our readers. We rejected the articles and told him why. Brother Ketcherside then published an almost entire issue of the Mission Messenger containing his remarks, our correspondence, and the four articles rejected by us.

Nothing would be said herein perhaps, were it not for the fact that Leroy Garrett has informed us that he has hired a secretary to copy the name and address of all who have reported to the Firm Foundation in the past several years, and, out of his unusual sense of fairness is paying for a copy of MM to be sent to them. Such deep concern is surely appreciated, and such a sense of fairness will of course cause him to reciprocate by sending FF containing our reply (there will be three or four of them) to as many readers of the MM.

We did not run Brother Ketcherside's articles because they did not conform to the request we made of him. We asked that he answer the criticisms, if they could be answered. Brother Roy Lanier had written a devastating series of five articles exposing Brother K's liberal and unscriptural teaching in the FF of September 11 through October 9, 1962. These were almost completely ignored. He failed to deal with the most potent charges of Glenn Wallace, and noticed only one of the objections offered by this editor. Because he took a peck or two at some minor, non-essential points and left completely ignored the valid, soundly based body of objection to which he was requested to reply, we did not run his articles.

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Brother K. presented one side of himself and his teachings in these articles to the Firm Foundation, while he presents an entirely different side in his speeches and lectures. He was all sweetness in the articles and all sarcasm in his California and Denver lectures. He bent over backwards in his public speeches to court the Digressives while throwing insults and

slurs at what he calls the "non-instrument segment of the Disciples Brotherhood." He calls the Lord's church the Church of Christ, always using a capital "C," thus equating it with denominational religious bodies. It was because he presented only what he knew brethren who were unacquainted with his false teaching would like to hear, and not the teaching for which he has been criticized, that we did not run his articles. We did not care for our readers to see an entirely different Ketcherside from the Ketcherside of the unity meeting with the Digressives.

Brother K. can hardly write an article, or make a speech without a jab at what he calls the "non-instrument segment of the Disciples brotherhood," but we have yet to see from his pen a single rebuke for those who presume to speak where the Bible has not spoken, and who insist upon the liberty to practice things the Bible nowhere allows. Constant use of the capital "C" when referring to the church of Christ, coupled with lovemaking with the Digressives through carefully worded platitudes that leave them no doubt that he thinks there is nothing sinful in any of their innovations, labels him as an entirely different man than the articles written for our reader's consumption present.

When Brother K. says "The church of God is no sect" he does not mean what you and I mean. He contends that the church that you and I are members of—the ONLY church you and I are members of—is a sect. It is of this body of people he speaks when he says, "No sect is the church of God." With his statements we agree; with their implication we most heartily disagree. Brother K. is a cunning manipulator of words and phrases. When people take his verbiage at face value he complains that he is misunderstood. Any man speaking of the unity for which Christ prayed ought to be able to speak so as to be understood. Mark this carefully: Brother K. actually denies that there is, or can be, any visible manifestation of the Lord's church. Since there are differences, and these differences create sects, and a sect isn't the whole—therefore, what is left of the body would be a sect also, since it could not be the whole either. Thus, Brother K. does not teach that some of God's sheep are "caught in strange thickets"; he actually thinks they all are. He thinks there is no pasture at all—only thickets.

We are very much interested in any effort that bids fair to remedy the disheartening divisions that exist among us. But we do not believe that one is completely in touch with reality who advocates that we just ignore differences and maybe they will go away. Something constructive must be done to remove them. Any unity plea is unsound that urges a loose amalgamation of various factions (as Brother K. advocates) without the removal of the basis of difference. Readers of the Firm Foundation have a right to know what Brother K. believes on this matter, and if he had presented in his articles what he has presented elsewhere, and for which he was soundly and justly criticized in these pages, we would have run them.

When, and if, Brother K. complies with our request to face up to, and reply to, the objections to what we consider to be his dangerous and unscriptural teachings on unity and fellowship, we will have the space available to carry his reply. We humbly agree with him that he has been in the past a Single-factionalist, giving endorsement to one narrow little segment; but now with the same candor, we recognize him as an All-factionalist, in that he supports and fellowships all factions. He has confused *unsectarianism* with *all-*

*sectarianism*. The past was bad, but the future is worse—just a bigger endorsement of more factions!